Navy Heritage Video

Suicide Awareness

Introduction

- Suicide is a tragic reality in our society and more specifically in the Navy.
- While the rate of suicides in the Navy is well below the national average, the loss of a shipmate or friend to suicide is a very painful, unnecessary, and preventable.
- In the U.S., suicide ranks among the top ten causes of death across all ages.
- For 10 years, suicide has been either the 2nd or 3rd leading cause of death among active-duty Sailors.

Importance

- The U.S. Surgeon General has called a serious public health threat to our nation and has pushed for the development of strategies to prevent suicide and the suffering that it causes.
- In response, the Navy and Marine Corps joined forces to develop a plan for suicide.
- With suicide rates as high as they are, you or someone you know is likely to be affected either directly or indirectly by this serious act.

Scenario

People who are suicidal need help. You can be in the position to make sure they get the help they need. Within the military, we help each other with no hesitation. When you find someone in need, you are the “First Responder.” YOUR help can make a LIFE SAVING difference!

Outline

- What is Suicide?
- Risk Factors/Warning Signs
- Be a First Responder
- The Workplace and Suicide

What is Suicide?

Introduction

Many of us know what suicide is, but there are other facets of suicide that we may not recognize.

Suicide Defined

Suicide is an intentional act resulting in one’s own death.

Suicide Behaviors

Suicidal behaviors encompass a broad range of acts, including suicide attempts, gestures, threats, and suicidal thoughts.

Suicide Attempt

A suicide attempt is an intentional act causing self-harm where death would have occurred without direct intervention.

Suicide Gesture

A suicide gesture is an intentional act suggesting a cry for help by causing physical self-harm or intending to cause physical self-harm. Suicidal gestures would not result in death if left unattended.

Suicide Statistics

- **Time of year -** The number of suicides per month is fairly constant throughout the year.
- **Gender -** More women than men attempt suicide, but more men than women actually succeed.
- **Race -** Caucasians have a higher suicide rate than other ethnic groups.
- **Age -** Suicide is most common among the elderly but becoming more common among teens and young

Statistics (con't)

- **Marital status** – Married people have a lower rate of suicide than those who are single, separated, divorced, or widowed.
- **Employment status** – Suicide is more common among the unemployed than working people.
- **Paygrade** – Petty Officers (E4-E6) have a higher rate of suicide than all other paygrades combined. This is directly related to the fact that the population of E4-E6 is higher than

Statistics (con’t)

- Overall, Navy suicide rates are lower than civilian rates when matched for gender, age, and racial differences. The reasons for this have a lot to do with the specific requirements for duty and the natural social support that exists in the Navy.
- Although the rates are lower among the military, suicide is still one of the top killers of Sailors.

What is suicide?

- An intentional act resulting in one's own death.
- An intentional act causing self-harm where death would have occurred without direct intervention.
- An intentional act causing physical self-harm that would not result in death if left unattended.
- An intentional act causing death to another person who wanted to die.

A:

Correct!

- Suicide is an intentional act resulting in one’s own death

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

What is a suicide attempt?

- An intentional act causing death to another person who wanted to die.
- An intentional act causing self-harm where death would have occurred without direct intervention.
- An intentional act causing physical self-harm that would not result in death if left unattended.
- An intentional act resulting in one's own death.

A:

Correct!

- A suicide attempt is an intentional act causing self-harm where death would have occurred without direct intervention.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

What is a suicide gesture?

- An intentional act resulting in one's own death.
- An intentional act causing physical self-harm that would not result in death if left unattended.
- An intentional act causing self-harm where death would have occurred without direct intervention.
- An intentional act causing death to another person who wanted to die.

A:

Correct!

- A suicide gesture is an intentional act causing physical self-harm that would not result in death if left unattended.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

Risk Factors/Warning Signs

Introduction

- Risk factors call our attention to the potential for suicide or suicidal behavior.
- There is no typical suicide victim.
- It is better to know and look for the warning signs and possibly to help someone considering suicide than to standby and let it happen.

Four Key Risk Factors

- Mental health problems like depression and previous suicide attempts or gestures.
- Substance abuse or the increase in use of alcohol.
- Situations that an individual labels as “hopeless.”
- Hints or talks about suicide.

Depressive Symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Loss of interest in or enjoyment of usually pleasurable activities
- Loss of energy, fatigue, slowed speech and muscle movement
- Decreased productivity, poor performance
- Expressed feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness, or low self-esteem
- Change in sleep habits
- Pessimism about the future, negative thoughts about the past
- No apparent pleasure in response to praise or rewards
- Tearfulness or crying
- Change in appetite, unwanted weight loss or weight gain
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- Decreased sex drive

Other Common Warning Signs

- Preoccupation with death
- Giving away possessions
- Relationship difficulties, including a recent loss or threat of significant loss
- Impulsive anger and behavior
- Legal or financial trouble
- Isolation and withdrawal from friends and family, social isolation, a sense of intolerable aloneness
- Performance difficulties
- Inability/unwillingness to connect with potential helpers

Reducing Risk Factors

- One strategy to prevent suicide is to reduce risk factors or strengthen and increase protective factors. Some protective factors include:
  - Good problem solving and coping skills
  - Optimistic outlook
  - Positive attitude about getting help early
  - Belief that it is OK to get help
  - Positive family and social support
  - Spiritual support
  - Early intervention by command

What are three key risk factors for suicide? Click on all that apply.

- ☐ Remote tours
- ☐ Mental health problems
- ☐ Desire to “get even
- ☐ Training stress
- ☐ “Hopeless” situations
- ☐ Rebellion against military discipline
- ☐ Substance abuse
- ☐ Daredevil mentality

Correct!

- Your answer is correct.

BACK

NEXT

$\mathcal{A}$:

Incorrect!

Consider your options and try again!

BACK

Which of the following is not a depressive symptom that is a warning sign of suicide.

- Unusual competitiveness
- Loss of interest or enjoyment in pleasurable activities
- No apparent pleasure in response to praise or rewards
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

Maria has been gaining weight and is not happy about it. She says she tends to be an emotional eater, but, according to her, the main problem is her lack of time to work out and her poor eating habits. She says after this big project, she's going to change her habits. Based on the information, is she depressed ding towa ide?

YES

NO

A:

Correct!

- Correct! The answer is no. Although she does exhibit some general warning signs of suicide, based on the information, her unhappiness is specific to her weight gain and she expresses a plan for working through the issue. It never hurts, though, to stay connected with her and watch for more signs.

BACK NEXT

A:

Incorrect!

- The answer is no. Although she does exhibit some general warning signs of suicide, based on the information, her unhappiness is specific to her weight gain and she expresses a plan for working through the issue. It never hurts, though, to stay connected with her and watch for more signs.

BACK

recent break-up with her boyfriend. Today, she lashed out in the break room because someone left an empty coffee pot on the burner. She slammed the pot so hard that it broke. After her supervisor confronted her, she began crying, and started clearing out her desk, saying she quit because she didn't need money anymore anyway, and she didn't need anyone's help or pity. Based [illegible] information, [illegible] ading suicide?

YES

NO

A:

Correct!

- Correct! The answer is yes. She is exhibiting some extreme warning signs that should not be ignored. She needs help to work through this crisis.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Incorrect. The answer is yes. She is exhibiting some extreme warning signs that should not be ignored. She needs help to work through this crisis.

BACK

Which are not general warning signs of suicide?

-
- Legal or financial trouble
-
- Taking on new interests in “extreme” sports, such as bungee jumping
- Poor performance at work
- Isolation and withdrawal from family and friends

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

Be A First Responder

Introduction

- There are some practical ways to help a person at risk for suicide.
- One way is by being a first responder to someone at risk for suicide and responding to the threat.

What Is A First Responder?

- A person who first recognizes the threat or risk of suicide and responds to prevent the possibility of suicide.
- A member of the community who observes that someone is in trouble, in this case possibly suicidal, and refers that person to sources of help.
- Could be anyone – a supervisor, Officer on Duty, family member, shipmate, coworker, friend, or YOU.

First Responder Duties

- A first responder has several duties when recognizing and responding to the threat or risk of suicide.
  - Learning what to observe and the possible meanings of what is observed.
  - Adopting an attitude that “I can help.”
  - Understanding what to do.
  - Knowing where to get professional help from resources in the military and civilian communities.

Guidelines for First Responders

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don’t debate. Don’t lecture.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Don’t dare him/her to do it.
- Don’t act shocked.
- Don’t be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available.
- Take action. Remove means, such as guns or stockpiled pills.
- Get help from persons or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

AID LIFE

A: Ask.

I: Intervene immediately.

D: Don’t keep it a secret.

L: Locate help.

I: Inform the Chain of Command of the situation.

F: Find someone to stay with the person now.

E: Expedite.

Suicide Resources

- Command Leadership
- Medical Services
- Mental Health
- Fleet and Family Support Centers
- Chaplains
- Marriage and Family Counselors
- Substance Abuse Counselors
- Financial Advisors

A _____ _____ is a person who first recognizes the threat or risk of suicide and takes action to prevent the possibility of suicide.

- ☐ Family friend
- ☐ First responder
- ☐ Social worker
- ☐ Police officer

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

“don’ts” when helping someone who is threatening suicide. Click on all the “do’s” – in other words, the things you *should* do. (Part 1)

- [x] Talk openly about suicide
- [ ]
- [ ] Lecture on the value of life
- [ ] Show interest and support
- [ ] Dare him/her to do it

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

“don’ts” when helping someone who is threatening suicide. Click on all the “do’s” – in other words, the things you *should* do. (Part 2)

- Act shocked that she/he would consider suicide
- ☐
- ☐ Offer hope without superficial reassurance
- ☐ Remove means, such as weapons or pills
- ☐ Get help from crisis or suicide intervention specialists

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

Click on the statements that are represented by the acronym AID LIFE.

A

- ☐ Ask, "Are you thinking of hurting yourself"?

I

- ☐
- ☐ Intimidate, "You'd better not do it!"

D

- ☐ Do it yourself.
- ☐ Don't keep it a secret.

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

Click on the statements that are represented by the acronym AID LIFE.

L

- ☐
- ☐ Locate help.

I

- ☐

F

- ☐
- ☐

E

- ☐ Expedite. Get help now.
- ☐ Educate. Explain why suicide is wrong.

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

The Workplace and Suicide

Introduction

- Workplace violence culminating in suicide is rare in the Navy.
- These incidents occur so seldom that it would be difficult to determine accurate rates or patterns of occurrence.
- However, all Sailors need to be armed with the information to be able to deal with this type of situation if it ever arises.

Warning Signs

- Indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve personal problems.
- Expressing fascination with incidents of workplace violence.
- Identifying with perpetrators of workplace violence.

Protective Factors

- Unit cohesion
- Camaraderie with others
- Involvement in the Navy lifestyle
- A sense of reward in serving the mission of the command
- A sense of being of assistance to others
- The feeling of being valued for contributions
- The feeling of being supported in times of need

People who have a history of violence or disruptive behavior are less likely to display this type of behavior in the workplace for fear of reprisal.

TRUE

FALSE

Incorrect!

- This statement is not true.
- People who have a history of violence or disruptive behavior are more likely to display this same type of behavior in the workplace.

BACK

A:

Correct!

- The statement is false.
- People who have a history of violence or disruptive behavior are more likely to display this same type of behavior in the workplace.

BACK NEXT

Which signs could indicate a predisposition to workplace violence? Click on all that apply.

- ☐ Telling co-workers that the work environment is unfair
- ☐ Indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve personal problems
- ☐ Identifying with perpetrators or workplace violence
- ☐ Expressing fascination with incidents of workplace violence

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

What are the factors that reduce the chance of workplace violence resulting in suicide? Click on all that apply.

- ☐ Involvement in Navy lifestyle
- ☐ Friendly competition
- ☐ Camaraderie
- ☐ Unit cohesion

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

What are the factors that reduce the chance of workplace violence resulting in suicide? Click on all that apply.

- ☐ Sense of reward in serving the mission
- ☐ Sense of being of assistance to others
- ☐ Feeling of being valued
- ☐ Feeling of being supported

$\mathcal{A}$:

Correct!

- Correct.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!

BACK

NROTC

- Midshipmen stressors
- Sources of help:
  - A Friend
  - Your Advisor
  - Any unit staff member
  - The University medical center
  - The police (911)
  - Suicide Hotline
  - A Minister or Chaplain

Summary